

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
 Hood Mercury Response - Removal Polrep
 Initial Removal Polrep



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
 Region VI**

Subject: POLREP #1
 Initial POLREP
 Hood Mercury Response

Odessa, TX
Latitude: 31.8825701 Longitude: -102.3758878

To: Anthony Buck, TCEQ
 Ragan Broyles, Superfund Division
 Lawrence Stanton, EPA HQ

From: Mike McAteer, OSC

Date: 3/20/2014

Reporting Period: March 18 to 20, 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority: CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead: PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date: 3/20/2014	Start Date:	3/20/2014
Demob Date:	Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:	State Notification:	
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Release of hazardous substance (elemental mercury) inside a school

1.1.2 Site Description

1.1.2.1 Location

Hood Junior High School - 601 E. 38th Street, Odessa, Texas 79762

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

EPA Region 6 was contacted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) as

well as the Texas Department of State Health Services on March 18, 2014, regarding a release of approximately 1 liquid ounce of elemental mercury inside Hood Junior High School in Odessa, Texas.

Early reports on the release indicated that a student found the mercury in a bottle near the school and he brought it inside the school where he shared it with other classmates. Once school administrators recognized that the students were playing with mercury, the exposed students were isolated from the rest of the students then sent by school bus to two local hospitals.

The school district has hired local hazmat contractors to conduct a cleanup of the school. Early assessment activities conducted appear to indicate that the contamination is limited to two classrooms and the cafeteria.

An EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) as well as two START personnel mobilized to the school on March 20th to provide assistance to the school district and the Ector County Health District.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Upon arrival, EPA met with Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) officials and their contractors to evaluate response actions to date. Allied International Emergency and CTEH have been contracted by ECISD to remediate Hood Junior High School. While clean-up activities are ongoing, students are attending class at the nearby Technical High School. EPA will conduct oversight and further investigate any possible spread of the mercury into the surrounding community by students who were potentially exposed.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

Contractors for ECISD continue to evaluate the extent of the Hg contamination within the school. Two rooms, (school cafeteria and one of the classrooms) have been identified as contaminated and work to remediate them is ongoing. Crews are utilizing "Mercury Eater" to absorb the mercury and removing floor tiles as necessary followed by the heating and venting of affected areas.

EPA is conducting a separate but coordinated effort to screen all areas of the school. In addition, the place of residence of the student who was identified as the source of the mercury has been monitored. Elevated mercury vapor readings were observed on the shoes and blankets in the closet of the house where the mercury was stored. All items of concern have been removed from the residence for disposal.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

<i>Waste Stream</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Manifest #</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Disposal</i>

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

Contractors will continue to heat and vent affected areas. EPA has coordinated with the school officials to perform further monitoring of all shoes students/faculty were wearing the day of the mercury release. If elevated mercury readings are observed, EPA will further investigate the residence of the student/faculty to whom they belong.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

Ongoing efforts will continue to ensure the mercury contamination has not been spread by students evacuated from the school into their place of residence.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

EPA will continue to coordinate with officials from the Ector County Independent School District to ensure proper remediation of Hood Junior High School.

2.2.2 Issues

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

No information available at this time.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

Ector County Independent School District

Ector County Health Department

Texas Department of State Health Services

TCEQ - Midland District

U.S. EPA

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

Weston Solutions, Inc.

Allied International Emergency Services

Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health, LLC (CTEH)

4. Personnel On Site

No information available at this time.

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

No information available at this time.

7. Situational Reference Materials

No information available at this time.